



## Commonwealth of Kentucky Public Protection Cabinet

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Thanksgiving is peak day for cooking fires** *Kentucky state fire marshal, NFPA urge cooks to stay in the kitchen*

**FRANKFORT, Ky.** (Nov. 16, 2012) – Don't forget basic cooking safety tips during this Thanksgiving season.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Thanksgiving is the leading day for home cooking fires. In 2010, cooking was involved in an estimated 156,400 home structure fires that were reported to U.S. fire departments. Those fires caused 420 deaths, 5,310 injuries and \$993 million in direct property damage.

"Being aware of fire safety while preparing your holiday meal can mean the difference between calling family and friends to the dinner table or calling the fire department to put out a fire," said Kentucky State Fire Marshal William Swope. "There are simple, common sense ways to reduce the risk of cooking fires."

Swope reminds Kentuckians to cook with caution by using the following safety tips:

- Be on alert! If you are sleepy or have consumed alcohol, don't use the stove or stovetop.
- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- If you are simmering, baking, roasting or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.

- Keep anything that can catch fire – oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains – away from your stovetop.
- Be mindful of the clothes you are wearing; keep loose sleeves and other clothing away from the stovetop.

Swope also discourages the use of outdoor gas-fueled turkey fryers that immerse the turkey in hot oil. These turkey fryers use a substantial quantity of cooking oil – approximately five gallons – at high temperatures, and units currently available for home use pose a significant danger that hot oil will be released at some point during the cooking process. The use of turkey fryers by consumers can lead to devastating burns, other injuries and the destruction of property.

**If you have a cooking fire:**

- Keep a lid nearby when you're cooking to smother small grease fires. Smother the fire by sliding the lid over the pan and turn off the stovetop. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cooled.
- For an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed.
- If you try to fight the fire, be sure others are getting out and you have a clear way out.
- When in doubt, just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire.
- Call 9-1-1 after you leave.

The state fire marshal's office in the Division of Fire Prevention is an agency of the Department of Housing, Buildings and Construction within the Public Protection Cabinet. Visit the website at <http://dhbc.ky.gov/sfm/>. Fire safety information is available at <http://www.nfpa.org>.

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